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ABSTRACT

Mentoring programs offer experienced caregivers and directors new encouragement to remain in the field by helping them learn to share their skills with others and grow in the profession. This report is the result of an information-gathering process among mentoring programs for early childhood educators in the United States. Following an introduction which summarizes and highlights findings, 19 programs, representing diverse approaches and objectives set in a variety of center-based and family child care program models, are profiled in detail. Other programs are listed in directory form at the end of the publication. The profiles are based on telephone questionnaires covering program history and design, numbers of participants, recruitment strategies and selection processes, contents of training, compensation of mentors, funding sources, budgets, evaluation and tracking efforts, program successes and barriers, and complete contact information. The survey focused on the variety of programs rather than on evaluative information. (DR)

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# EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTORING PROGRAMS

## A SURVEY OF COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

NATIONAL CENTER FOR THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORK FORCE

1996

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# EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTORING PROGRAMS

## A SURVEY OF COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

PREPARED BY

GRETCHEN STAHR BREUNIG AND DAN BELLM

FOR THE

NATIONAL CENTER FOR THE
EARLY CHILDHOOD WORK FORCE

1996

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# Early Childhood Mentoring Programs: A Survey of Community Initiatives

## Introduction

Throughout the United States, in the face of daunting barriers, child care teachers and family child care providers strive daily to nurture the healthy development of young children. But they face equally daunting barriers in pursuing their own development as early childhood professionals: low salaries, scant benefits, limited access to training, and high job turnover among their peers (NCECW, 1989 and 1993; Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study Team, 1995). In response, communities around the country are experimenting with strategies to reverse these trends. An especially promising approach is the creation of early childhood mentoring programs, which offer a peer-oriented model of on-the-job training, guidance and apprenticeship that is often linked with increased compensation.

Mentoring programs offer experienced caregivers and directors new encouragement to remain in the field by helping them learn to share their skills with others and grow in the profession. By creating a new step on the child care career ladder, by addressing a serious shortage of on-the-job child care training, and by emphasizing excellence in daily practice, mentoring programs have been instrumental in stemming staff turnover and enhancing program quality for young children and their families. Mentoring also offers novice caregivers (often called "protégés") a practical and supportive way to learn and to overcome the many hurdles of the critical first years on the job.

Over the past decade, the National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force (NCECW) has been active in studying and developing mentoring program models. In 1988, the organization (then called the Child Care Employee Project) developed and established the California Early Childhood Mentor Teacher Program in collaboration with Chabot College, and helped coordinate its rapid expansion over the next several years. In 1993, Chabot College assumed administrative responsibility for the program, which now operates at 27 community colleges across California, and NCECW continued its role in evaluation, technical assistance, and policy work related to mentoring programs. Most recently, NCECW

released its evaluation of the California model in a report entitled *The Potential of Mentoring: An Assessment of the California Early Childhood Mentor Teacher Program*.

In March 1995, in response to rapidly growing interest in mentoring programs, NCECW launched a nationwide **Early Childhood Mentoring Alliance** as a forum for sharing ideas, information and technical assistance among programs. The Alliance was an outgrowth of informal meetings and contacts among mentoring program representatives that had occurred over several years at National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) conferences and other professional events—culminating in a June 1994 "Roundtable" co-sponsored by NCECW and Wheelock College that drew 100 participants from 31 states. Financial support from the Rockefeller Brothers Foundation, Teaching Strategies, Inc., the American Express Philanthropic Program and the Carnegie Corporation of New York was instrumental in getting the Mentoring Alliance underway.

Alliance membership now includes mentors, program developers, policy makers, trainers and other child care advocates in over 40 states who are interested in supporting and sustaining mentoring program initiatives. Among the most frequent requests from Alliance members has been the creation of a mentoring program directory that would include in-depth descriptions of various program models around the country, as a way to help communities develop appropriate strategies to meet their child care staffing and training needs.

This report is the result of an information-gathering process among mentoring programs in the United States. Nineteen programs are profiled in detail here, representing a variety of center-based and family child care program models, and others are listed in directory form at the end of the publication. For the profiles, we conducted telephone questionnaires covering program history and design, numbers of participants, recruitment strategies and selection processes, contents of training, compensation of mentors, funding sources, budgets, evaluation and tracking efforts, and program successes and barriers. Since our intent was to research the variety of programs now underway, rather than to evaluate programs' efficacy in reaching their stated goals, the inclusion of certain programs and not others should not be construed as an endorsement by NCECW or the Early Childhood Mentoring Alliance. While we cannot claim that this sample fully represents the range of existing mentoring efforts in early childhood education, we do believe that the information provided here will help readers to examine possible strategies and—perhaps most

importantly—to network with mentoring program representatives for further information, advice and support. (Note: If your mentor program is not included here, and you would like it to be listed when we update our program directory, please send information to NCECW.)

The programs surveyed represent a diverse set of approaches and objectives. Of the 19 programs in our sample, eight work exclusively with family child care providers, five work exclusively with center-based providers, and six work in a combination of settings. The size of programs ranges from five mentors to over 150 in 1994-95, and from five protégés to over 220. Despite the apparent differences in program models and local needs, the similarities among the programs are striking, especially in the content of mentor training, the commitment to improved compensation for mentors (and in some cases protégés), the emphasis on leadership development, and, unfortunately, the insecurity of program funding.

**A CONTINUUM OF APPROACHES TO SERVE LOCAL NEEDS**

We have found that the "spark" that ignites a mentoring program design often comes from visionary child care activists in a community—advocates and leaders who recognize the importance of providing support to caregiving staff who want to make child care a long-term career. Although the programs we surveyed shared many common goals and activities, each model to some degree was created to address particular, local child care concerns. While nearly all early childhood professionals face the constraints of inadequate funds, low compensation, high turnover, and limited training opportunities, each community can also have its own "symptoms of crisis"—an inadequate number of licensed family child care providers, for example, or a shortage of accredited training to help caregivers comply with state mandates. As a result, approaches to mentoring varied among the programs we surveyed, from grassroots recruitment and training strategies to major policy changes in higher education or licensing systems.

**TRAINING**

Although mentoring efforts have generally developed independently and with limited knowledge of each other, program developers have reached remarkably similar conclusions about the core training needs of mentors and protégés. Training generally touches on the issues of adult development and adult learning styles, supervision skills, effective communication, definitions of high-quality child care, classroom/home quality assessment tools, diversity, anti-bias education, leadership,

advocacy and professionalism. Of the 19 programs surveyed, all but two provide formal training to mentors, often for college credit, ranging from orientations or pre-service training and course work to ongoing seminars or support during the mentoring experience. In order to keep participants from incurring additional expenses or financial losses during training, many programs cover all or part of tuition costs, books and other materials, transportation, substitutes and/or release time.

Some programs have also looked to other communities to replicate training models or to share a curriculum. The Milwaukee Early Childhood Mentor Teacher Program, for example, developed its curriculum based on a model created in Massachusetts by Wheelock College, and the Mentor/Partner Project in Alexandria, Virginia used the Detroit-Wayne County Family Child Care Mentoring Program as a guide.

**COMPENSATION**

While mentoring programs generally share a desire to increase teacher and provider compensation, the variety of current approaches can be grouped into three distinct levels of support. The first is to offset some or all of participants' training costs, as outlined above; the second is to provide some kind of stipend or honorarium, however limited, as a reward for participating in the program; and the third is to create a more formal career step that permanently connects the mentoring role with higher wages. While most mentoring programs appear to agree that this third level is the proper goal, some have only reached the first or second stage because of limited funding. At the very least, offering significant coverage of participants' training costs, so that the mentor/protégé experience doesn't worsen their financial hardship, would seem to be a minimum component of good practice in establishing a mentoring program model.

**DURATION OF FUNDING**

Another common thread in all interviews was the short-term nature and unpredictability of most funding sources. As a result, mentoring program developers are generally forced to devote much of their creativity and energy toward fundraising and the pursuit of financial stability. The 19 programs surveyed range in size from no formal budget whatsoever to an annual budget of approximately $670,000. Six have been supported entirely by public funds (primarily CCDBG quality improvement funds), six have received only private support, and seven have benefited from a combination of public and private funds.

A number of programs have relied on federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds made available in their states for such quality improvement activities as staff training and compensation. But several programs that were developed with CCDBG funds are either ceasing operation or are struggling to continue—and uncertainty about the Block Grant's future is causing concern to many others as well. On the other hand, private support can prove equally unstable. Some programs which started as pilot projects with private foundation support are straining to operate or have been unable to continue their work with mentors because their funding period came to an end.

While some of the efforts we surveyed are no longer in operation, however, or will soon end due to lack of funds, this does not necessarily mean that they have come to a complete halt. In a number of cases, communities have learned a great deal from temporary pilot programs and are going on to develop new proposals and activities.

**EVALUATION**

The majority of mentor programs in our sample had concerns related to the evaluation of their programs. They recognize that reliable evaluation processes are critical in determining what works and doesn't, in helping others to learn from one's experience, in documenting and promoting the value of mentoring to policy makers and funders, and in formulating policy recommendations for the field as a whole.

But many programs have not engaged in formal and/or longitudinal evaluations, in part because of the short-term nature of their funding. Some have only collected demographic data on participants and/or anecdotal information on implementation issues. Yet despite funding constraints, over half the programs surveyed had sought evaluative feedback in some form—whether informally by eliciting comments from participants, or through classroom/home quality assessment tools or statistical analyses of progress in certain areas. One finding that has emerged from various evaluations is that mentors and protégés frequently express a strong need for some ongoing way to remain connected with others in the field after their formal mentoring relationship has come to an end.

Our findings in this survey illustrate both the health and exuberance of the growing early childhood mentoring field, and this new field's many vulnerabilities. In particular, the program representatives' comments on their ongoing needs for guidance in such areas as evaluation, fundraising,

and mentor compensation serve to highlight the importance of the Early Childhood Mentoring Alliance as a source of technical assistance and mutual support. If you have not already done so, we urge you to join with other colleagues in the mentoring field by becoming part of the Alliance. Members receive a semi-annual newsletter along with action alerts and other resource materials, and are invited to participate in a variety of meetings, forums and networking opportunities. Each summer, in addition, NCECW and Wheelock College staff co-teach an advanced seminar on mentoring at Wheelock College in Boston. (The July 1996 seminar will focus on "Starting and Refining Mentoring Programs.")

This survey report is one of a series of publications on mentoring now available or in development at NCECW for the Mentoring Alliance. We have also produced *Mentoring in Early Care and Education: Refining an Emerging Career Path* (1994), based on the June 1994 Roundtable co-sponsored by NCECW and Wheelock College, and *The Potential of Mentoring: An Assessment of the California Early Childhood Mentor Teacher Program* (1995).

In 1996, in response to a growing need for a comprehensive tool for mentor and protégé training, we will release the *Early Childhood Mentoring Curriculum*, a three-part, flexible teaching tool for center-based teachers and family child care providers that can be adapted for use in communities throughout the country. The series will include a Curriculum Guide for the training of mentor teachers and providers; a Handbook for mentors to use with their protégés, and a Trainer's Guide. Areas covered will include the goals of mentoring programs; adult development; peer coaching and reflective practice; respecting diversity; the process of change in individuals and organizations; moving toward excellence as a teacher or provider; building relationships between mentors and protégés; skills for effective mentoring; planning and implementing a learning session for adults; and mentors as leaders and advocates for quality child care.

Early childhood mentoring programs not only offer sensible and effective training for new and experienced members of the child care work force; they also cultivate new leadership in promoting excellence for the entire child care field. We hope you will find this survey report useful and informative, and we look forward to working with you to build stronger mentoring programs in communities nationwide.

# PROGRAM PROFILES

## California Early Childhood Mentor Teacher Program, Hayward, California

### SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The California Early Childhood Mentor Teacher Program places early childhood education students in community-based settings (centers, family child care homes, school-age programs, or Head Start) for completion of their practicum requirement under the supervision of a mentor. Mentors complete a course in adult supervision and apply to a selection committee. Once selected, mentors use their classrooms as a training environment, and earn stipends for time spent in supervision of student teachers and continued in-service training. Begun in 1988, the program now operates at 28 community colleges in California, and in 1994-95 it placed 235 student teachers with 175 mentors. NCECW interviewed the director of the program, which is administered at Chabot College.

### ELIGIBILITY

Mentor candidates must have at least two years of experience in an early childhood setting, as well as an A.A. degree or a certificate in Early Childhood Education (an element of which must have been the completion of a supervised practicum), and must have completed the adult supervision course for mentors.

### OUTREACH

The program has generally recruited mentors through brochures and by word of mouth, but a training video completed in 1995 is now used for recruitment as well. To recruit student teachers and to help students learn about the program, mentors make classroom presentations in various early

childhood education courses. Instructors are also responsible for letting students know about this option in the practicum course. A student recruitment video was also completed in 1995 and is being shown throughout the state.

**SELECTION OF MENTORS AND STUDENT TEACHERS**

Mentors submit written applications to a selection committee, which consists of at least eight members for a program located at a single community college, or at least 12 members for a program operating through a regional collaborative of community colleges. The selection committee reviews the applications and decides which candidates will receive a site visit. Applicants from accredited programs undergo an abbreviated process. For programs that are not accredited, two committee members then visit each finalist's classroom and make an assessment using the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale or Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (developed by Harms and Clifford). Finalists also submit a self-review using the same instrument. The two committee members and the finalist then review the three scores and discuss any discrepancies; the committee members then make a recommendation of acceptance, rejection or further review to the entire committee, which reconvenes to make final selections of mentors.

**TRAINING OF MENTORS**

Mentor candidates complete a community college course on adult supervision skills. Each participating college is free to add to the basic syllabus provided to the program, but all courses cover the subjects of supervision in early childhood settings, the stages of adult and teacher development, formal quality assessment, advocacy and leadership development. The course carries college credit, and is a prerequisite to applying to be a mentor.

In addition, mentors meet monthly in an ongoing seminar on supervision issues that is offered by the community college. Fifty mentors also attend an annual Institute to which all expenses are pre-paid by the program. The Institute includes discussion of leadership issues, programmatic issues, and mentors' roles.

**COMPENSATION**

Mentor stipends range from $500 to $4,900 annually, based on the number of lab hours spent in mentoring students. An annual $500 in-service training

stipend acknowledges the time which mentors devote to ongoing meetings, the Institute, and other professional development and leadership activities.

**PROGRAM FUNDING**

Since 1993, the program has been entirely supported by federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds, with an annual budget of $669,496. Administration is by the Chabot-Las Positas Community College District through a contract with the California Department of Education.

The program was begun as a pilot project in 1988 by the Child Care Employee Project (now NCECW) and Chabot College with a budget of $40,000, and it subsequently received about $280,000 over two and a half years from a consortium of foundations: United Way of the Bay Area, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the American Express Foundation, the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, the Stulsaft Foundation, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, the San Francisco Foundation, the Clorox Company Foundation, and the ARCO Foundation.

**PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING**

The program tracks its progress by collecting information from the colleges on the numbers of participants and their stipend levels. It also collects demographic infomation on where mentors work and the children they serve, as well as their work place earnings, ethnicity, languages spoken, and areas of expertise.

NCECW completed an evaluation of the program which compared changes in teaching skills between student teachers who had worked with mentors in the CECMTP and other students participating in a more traditional college lab school practicum. (See *The Potential of Mentoring: An Assessment of the California Early Childhood Mentor Teacher Program*, 1995, available from NCECW for $20.00.)

**SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS**

As reported by the Program Director, a major success of the program is increased leadership in the field by mentors, who have begun organizing meetings, outreach forums at conferences and events to advocate for the program. Another promising outcome has been the approval of a revised state permit which formally designates a new Master Teacher position,

which will help to recognize and institutionalize the mentor's role in state-subsidized programs. In terms of obstacles, the director identified the state Department of Education's slow progress in incorporating the project and its goals into its overall child care quality improvement plan.

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## The Caring Partnership
## Bellevue, Washington

### SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Caring Partnership places new family child care providers, who have recently completed their basic training towards licensure, with more experienced mentor providers. Mentors receive a stipend of approximately $30 to visit the student's home for one hour and offer technical assistance on a topic specified by the student. Each mentor can receive up to $300 in stipends per year. Since the Caring Partnership began in 1991, 700 students have completed basic training and have been placed with mentors; there are now nine mentors in the program. NCECW interviewed the program coordinator at Child Care Resources, the Seattle-based resource and referral agency which developed and now administers the Caring Partnership.

The Caring Partnership is one of 40 sites in the U.S. for the Child Care Aware project, a privately-funded initiative begun in 1988 and originally known as Family-to-Family. Child Care Aware aims to improve access to training, foster leadership development, and encourage accreditation for family child care providers. An estimated 80 to 90 percent of Child Care Aware sites now have some sort of mentoring program, with the additional goal of enhancing family child care quality through peer relationships. Common elements include training, stipends and support networks for mentors.

### ELIGIBILITY

Mentor candidates must be licensed family child care providers with training and experience in early childhood education and an interest in working with adults. Protégés must be new providers who are enrolled in a 15-hour course offered by Child Care Resources and are working towards becoming licensed.

### OUTREACH

Mentors were originally recruited through a flyer sent to all licensed providers, and a newspaper advertisement. The program now also sends

letters to specific providers who have been recommended by the King County Child Care Program, City of Seattle Child Care Program, state licensors, Child Care Resources staff, or family child care associations. Recruitment efforts are also targeting certain geographic areas and seeking to create a more ethnically diverse group.

### SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS

To apply, mentor candidates send a resume and fill out a mentor profile with the location of their home, their areas of specialization, and their educational background. Most candidates are accepted. The program also plans to begin holding evening orientation sessions for the entire group of mentors, at which experienced mentors can share insights and candidates can learn about the program.

### TRAINING OF MENTORS

Mentors do not participate in any training in this program, although the coordinator plans to incorporate some training into the group orientations; she particularly sees needs for training in the areas of anti-bias curriculum and diversity.

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR PROTÉGÉS

Protégés are placed with a mentor for a one-hour session when they have completed the Child Care Resources pre-licensing course, which is offered six times a year and has up to 18 graduates in each class. A mentor request form is distributed to students at the last session of the course, and the coordinator matches them with mentors based on preferences, location, and areas of need.

### COMPENSATION

Mentors are paid $27.75 for one hour of technical assistance per student, the same rate of pay received by all other Child Care Resources trainers, and they can receive up to $300 in stipends per year.

### PROGRAM FUNDING

The total budget of $6,700 for the mentor program includes $2,500 for mentor compensation, $800 for the library, $400 for the quarterly mailing, and $3,000 for administration. Sources of funding include grants from Mervyn's, King County, the City of Seattle and Safeco.

**PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING**

To track progress, mentors report on topics covered in their sessions with protégés, and the program collects demographic information on the students. The program also conducts follow-up calls to students six months after they have completed the course, in order to get anecdotal information on the impact of the course and the mentoring experience. The only information kept on mentors is what is provided in their applications, including areas of specialization, educational background, languages spoken and ethnicity. The coordinator plans to conduct a survey of participants at the newly developed orientation-night program. Child Care Aware has also conducted a national study of its sites.

**SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS**

According to the coordinator, the major barriers have been problems with program implementation. The program has had insufficient communication with the mentors, and mentors sometimes did not know what to expect, especially if they were not matched with a student. Some mentors even stopped participating because they felt the program was no longer interested in them. The program is now working to establish a better communication system and to provide mentors with more recognition. Successes include establishing a program library, and offering mentor providers a level of compensation commensurate with other trainers.

**CONTACT**

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# Child Care Mentoring Initiative of Louise Child Care, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

### SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Child Care Mentoring Initiative of Louise Child Care, begun in 1993, selects respected early childhood leaders as mentors in the community and assigns them to work 100 hours over 12 months with protégé centers. In this program, the "protégé" is not an individual but rather the entire staff of a child care center, including the director and teachers. Centers have the option to renew the contract for another 25 hours over three months. The program collaborates with the University of Pittsburgh and other local colleges, and has a total of 24 mentors who have worked with 42 centers. The program expands each year. NCECW interviewed the Program Coordinator at Louise Child Care.

### ELIGIBILITY

Mentor candidates generally have a minimum of a Master's degree, although the base requirement is enrollment in a graduate program. In addition, candidates must have either directed a child development program or trained adults to work with children.

### OUTREACH

The program recruits mentors through a list of trainers who receive funds from state training grants. Potential protégé centers were recruited through the local resource and referral agency, the child care licensing department, and continuing education/training events in the community.

### SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS

The selection committee is composed of the Program Coordinator, the Associate Coordinator, and the Executive Director of Louise Child Care. The formal application includes questions on work experience in group child care, administration, and caregiver training. Candidates also write essays on their training philosophy and style. The program has generally

selected educators and administrators who are well known in the community for their expertise.

All licensed centers in Allegheny County are invited to participate as protégés. Centers are selected randomly to represent a broad range of child care services.

**TRAINING FOR MENTORS**

Because the program recruits highly-educated persons from the community, the mentors do not engage in any training specific to their new role. The coordinator anticipates, however, that future candidates will need mentor training; the program is therefore establishing a 100-hour certificate program called "Leadership and Mentoring" through the Department of Child Development, School of Social Work at the University of Pittsburgh. Tuition costs will be covered by a private grant, and participants will have the option of receiving graduate credit. Training more mentors will enable the program to reach its goal of mentoring 400 centers.

Mentors meet every six weeks on average to discuss their work, in addition to two annual retreats in summer and winter. At the winter retreat, mentors spend an entire day discussing plans to write and publish articles on mentoring and other pertinent child development topics.

**COMPENSATION**

Mentors are paid $50 per hour for the time they spend at the protégé site. Protégé centers are not paid, although they receive other forms of support such as scholarships for workshops.

**PROGRAM FUNDING**

Six years ago, a consortium of foundations convened a task force to discuss strategies to improve the quality of child care. The consortium included The Pittsburgh Foundation, the Howard Heinz Endowment, the R.K. Mellon Foundation, the Buhl Foundation, the Grable Foundation, the Frick Foundation and Alcoa Foundation. The task force developed goals, and Louise Child Care developed a grant proposal for the mentor program as one strategy to improve child care quality. The idea came from a similar model at the Arsenal Family Children's Center, started by Erik Erikson and Benjamin Spock in the 1960s as a lab school.

The Child Care Mentoring Initiative is entirely supported by these private local foundations at an annual budget of $300,000. Currently, protégés receive training from mentors at no cost, but next year a sliding fee will be charged for the service. The estimated cost for protégés would be $1,000 per 100 hours with the mentor.

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR PROTÉGÉS

The protégé center and mentor develop an individualized mentoring plan, and contract to meet the center's training and program needs within the100 hours of commitment to the program. The mentoring plan is based partially upon classroom assessments using the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS), which enables the mentor and protégé centers to reach consensus on priorities for improvement.

### PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING

The program has just embarked on a formal longitudinal evaluation. Only anecdotal feedback, which has been very positive, is currently available. Using the ECERS, the program has documented improvements in child development environments, and the next area of study will be changes in interactions between teachers and children. The independent evaluator has summarized and analyzed anecdotal information and ECERS scores for all sites, but not for all classrooms. The coordinator also collects information on a quarterly basis on the education and training of mentors, as well as information on staff, director and child turnover at protégé centers.

### SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS

According to the coordinator, the program has succeeded in developing a support system for mentors and directors to address the issues of quality. The primary obstacle, in his view, has involved situations in which directors of certain protégé centers were relatively resistant to change.

### CONTACT

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# Child Care Professional Mentoring Project Houston, Texas

## SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Department of Regulatory Services established this mentoring program as a peer support project for child care programs with identified needs for improvement, as well as for programs becoming newly licensed. Mentors are experienced center directors or family child care providers who agree to help less experienced protégés on a short-term basis. Since the program began in 1991, about 200 protégés have been placed with about 50 mentors.

The Child Care Professional Mentoring Project developed as a collaboration between the Department of Regulatory Services and the local early childhood community (Houston AEYC and Neighborhood Centers, Inc.). While the program began in Houston, it has now been replicated in the three other licensing regions of Texas. (The data in this profile refer only to the Houston region.) NCECW interviewed the Regional Director of the Department of Regulatory Services.

## ELIGIBILITY

Any center-based or family child care provider in good standing with the Department of Regulatory Services is eligible to be a mentor.

## OUTREACH

The Department of Regulatory Services, Division of Licensing receives referrals for potential mentors and protégés from licensing staff, and from Neighborhood Centers, Inc. staff who work with a variety of community-based child care programs. The Department of Regulatory Services has also conducted frequent presentations at professional conferences held by Houston AEYC, family child care associations and other early childhood professional groups, and at its orientations of new providers.

**SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS**

Mentors complete an application with information on their educational background, professional strengths, the size of their facility, and the type of program they represent (e.g. nonprofit or for-profit center, family child care home, etc.). Completion of this application is the only prerequisite to being included in the data bank of potential mentors; mentors are not screened for program quality, but the recommendation of licensing monitors is seriously considered. The Department of Regulatory Services, Division of Licensing has discretion over which mentors are matched with particular protégés, and if the mentor's licensing file and local reputation are questionable, he or she does not receive any protégé referrals. Mentors renew their applications annually; they must be licensed and in good standing, and commit to serving as mentors for at least six months.

Protégés complete a similar questionnaire indicating their licensing status and the issues they would like to work on with mentors. The Department of Regulatory Services matches protégés with mentors based on similarity of facilities, geographic proximity, needs and strengths. Protégés work with mentors for six months, but can continue to work informally for longer periods.

**TRAINING OF MENTORS**

Mentors complete a two-hour orientation session and receive a program manual. The orientation is motivational and covers the basic mechanics of the program, including the agencies involved, procedures and mentors' roles and responsibilities. In addition, mentors can attend Houston AEYC conferences and training events free of charge, in order to continue to develop professionally and enhance their skills. No college credit is offered for the orientation or Houston AEYC training.

**COMPENSATION**

Neither mentors nor protégés receive compensation for their involvement in the program.

**PROGRAM FUNDING**

Although the program has no formal budget, the Department of Regulatory Services, Division of Licensing is able to reimburse mentors for mileage. They have also received small grants from NAEYC, SACUS (now SECA) and Texas AEYC to buy books and materials for mentors and providers.

**PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING**

Once a year, the Department of Regulatory Services, Division of Licensing schedules a thank-you and evaluation session, but according to our informants these have not yielded much useful data. The Department of Regulatory Services keeps data from participants' questionnaires but does not formally evaluate the program or track its effects.

**SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS**

The program enables center directors and family child care providers to learn from their peers, and mentors have a greater impact on the quality of care because they tend to have a better rapport with protégés than regulators do. The program has been especially successful with new, unlicensed providers, who are able to use mentors as free consultants. It has been less successful, however, with programs which the Division of Licensing has referred to mentors for help but which are unreceptive to improving the quality of their care. The Division of Licensing has come to believe that the program should perhaps be limited to protégés who are newly or recently involved in the field.

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## The Children's Health Council Child Care Mentor Program Palo Alto, California

### SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Children's Health Council Child Care Mentor Program pairs experienced center-based teachers with less experienced teachers in other centers. Protégés (called interns by this program) work with mentors for one semester, concurrent with their enrollment in a college course on observation skills. Mentors and interns observe each other at their respective sites once a week for 90 minutes, alternating sites each week, and meet for a conference afterward to discuss the observation. The program has been in operation since 1989, and has paired 50 interns with 50 mentors. NCECW interviewed the program coordinator at the Children's Health Council.

### ELIGIBILITY

Mentor candidates must have a minimum of an A.A. degree (preferably a B.A.), be affiliated with a professional organization, and have worked in the child care field for at least five years. Intern candidates have no minimum educational requirements, but they must have worked in their center for at least a year, have an interest in broadening their understanding of individual children, be motivated to learn and eager to excel, and demonstrate a sense of responsibility.

### OUTREACH

The program sends a mailing to 50-80 licensed centers in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. Program staff also make presentations at community college courses and distribute flyers at conferences.

### SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS

The mentor application contains several essay questions, including the reasons why candidates want to be mentors, their philosophy of quality child care, the leading child care issues of the 1990s, their experience in

working with new teachers, and the people who have influenced their teaching style and shaped their philosophy of child development. These applications are reviewed by a six-person committee representing Canada College, local child care centers, mentor teachers, and the Children's Health Council. After reviewing the written applications, one or two committee members assess each candidate's classroom, using Harms and Clifford's Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS). The candidate's program is required either to be accredited by NAEYC or to achieve a score of at least 5 ("good") on each element of the ECERS. Applications are received and reviewed twice a year, with approximately 16 to 20 applicants each time.

Interns complete the same written application, with the endorsement of their directors. The selection committee reviews only the written application; no site visits are scheduled, and generally all interns who apply are accepted. The program coordinator matches interns with mentors based on individual goals, program similarity (age group, philosophy, etc.), logistics, and in part, personality.

**TRAINING OF MENTORS**

The Children's Health Council holds seminars which mentors are asked to attend during their placement with interns. The curriculum includes the following topics: 1) the mentor's role, and the ways it differs from a supervisory role; 2) support systems in the workplace; 3) communication skills with interns, colleagues, directors and parents; 4) observing individual children in the classroom; 5) specific issues in the physical, social and cognitive development of young children; 6) early intervention; and 7) understanding parents' perspectives.

Interns enroll in a three-credit Canada College field work course, at a cost of $13 per credit, meet with the program coordinator as a group twice during the semester, and complete a journal of their classroom observations and mentor/intern conferences.

**COMPENSATION**

Mentors and interns receive a stipend of $500 for the semester from the Children's Health Council.

**PROGRAM FUNDING**

The annual budget of $25,000, which is received from private foundations, allows for the participation of eight mentor/intern teams each semester. The budget includes compensation for mentors, and up to $10 per hour for two hours of substitute coverage during observation and conference sessions.

**PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING**

Each participant provides the program with a written evaluation. The program coordinator collects information on job satisfaction and retention from directors, mentors and interns, but does not conduct a formal assessment.

**SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS**

The program coordinator expressed the belief that the program has recognized master teachers and elevated their status in their centers and in the community. She was also proud of the program's reputation in the community, which is evidenced by the mentors' and center directors' frequent desire to continue participating at the end of a semester. Obstacles include the time commitment required of the mentor and intern and the related difficulty of finding substitutes for the two-hour visit each week. In addition, other center staff members sometimes feel resentful about not being selected by their director as good mentor candidates, while carrying the extra burden of working in the classroom during the mentor's absence.

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# DART Mentor Teacher Training Union, New Jersey

## SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The DART Mentor Teacher Training Program has four main components: child development, interactional processes, clinical supervision, and mentoring and advisement. In the three-year pilot program which ran from June 1991 to June 1994, a master trainer coordinated the training curriculum, taught a 60-hour seminar to field trainers, and held a bimonthly meeting with field trainers (mentors) to discuss program issues. Field trainers conducted 25 hours of field work (including five observations) in protégés' classrooms or homes, attended seminars with the protégés, and conducted a pre- and post-test of protégés' classrooms or homes using one of the Environmental Rating Scales developed by Harms and Clifford. Protégés attended 35 hours of seminar training, and met with their field trainers to plan the observations and field work. Since the pilot phase ended in 1994, the program has been supported by Kean College, and the training is now being conducted on a fee basis for various client agencies--currently Monday Morning, Inc., a family child care support network, and Summit Child Care Centers, a large multi-site program. Thirty-six mentors and 36 protégés participated in the three-year pilot; in 1995, 25 mentors and 25 protégés received training--12 pairs of center-based teachers and 13 pairs of family child care providers. NCECW interviewed the program coordinator at Kean College.

## ELIGIBILITY

The original pilot set no formal eligibility requirements, but the program now requires that mentor candidates have at least three years of child care experience and (in center-based care) have lead teacher status. Protégés have varying minimum requirements, depending upon the host program. In the Summit Child Care program, protégés must have less than two years experience in the center; protégés and mentors must also work at the same site but not in the same classroom, and must work with similar age groups.

**OUTREACH**

The pilot project recruited informally by sending letters of invitation to child development programs. Client agencies now conduct their own outreach efforts for mentors and protégés.

**SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS**

Because the DART training program now works on a fee basis with other client agencies, those agencies select their own mentor candidates, setting their own criteria with DART's recommendations.

**TRAINING OF MENTORS**

In the pilot project, mentors and protégés participated in two seminars and engaged in two field visits per month for eight months, totalling 25 hours of field experience as part of their 60 hours of training. The syllabus contains 14 topics geared towards the needs of the center or family child care home, including an introduction to the model; mentoring principles, roles, and functions; adult development; training in the use of the Environmental Rating Scales as a pre- and post-test; infant and child development; interactional processes; classroom observation; and supervision and feedback skills. Although mentors have not received credit to date, the trainer will submit the course syllabus to be considered for three graduate credits.

Summit Child Care Centers requires 20 hours of training per year for their staff, generally at staff members' expense; the mentor training, however, is provided for free and enables participants to earn 30 hours, or 10 hours in excess of their requirement for the year. Protégés earn 12-20 hours towards their requirement, also free of charge. Summit calculates that this complimentary DART Training is the equivalent of up to $3,000 in tuition, books and materials, and it is also exploring the creation of a new job title and salary level for mentors who have completed the DART training.

**COMPENSATION.**

Participants receive no compensation.

**PROGRAM FUNDING**

The three-year pilot program received private funds totaling $227,000 from the Prudential Foundation, the AT&T Family Development Fund, the Schumann Fund for New Jersey, and Mutual of New York. The program

now receives partial support from Kean College for the director's salary, and from two training contracts totalling $4,000. Contracts for a planned Child Development Associate (CDA) training program will result in another $35,000 of support. Private funding for a collaborative program with a state university contributes an additional $237,545 to train 40 Child Development Associate (CDA) candidates and 20 mentor teachers, and to move programs toward NAEYC accreditation.

**PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING**

For the pilot, the program collected information on the mentor's work place, age group of children served, educational background, and professional experience. No data collection system has been established for the clients of the fee-based program, but one has been implemented for the current collaborative training project.

An independent evaluation of the pilot program was conducted by Collaborative Ventures, Inc. and completed in June 1994. Among the findings, CVI noted that pre- and post-test Environmental Rating Scale assessments showed a positive impact in many of the classrooms: seven of the 16 test sets (44%) had scores that increased by 25 percent or more during the DART training. In the Classroom Observation, the average total score ranged from 0.57 to 0.78, based on a perfect score of 1.0. CVI recommended such changes as strengthening the role of the Board of Directors, documenting training curriculum, documenting roles and responsibilities of participants, improving communication processes, formalizing the participant selection process, offering college credit for the training, developing a formal matching process for mentors and protégés, and seeking funds to strengthen staff.

**SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS**

According to the program director, staff feel empowered after going through the training, and generally report improved communication skills and an expansion of their knowledge base. Programs also report improvements in supervisor-staff interactions and increased self-confidence among staff members. The short-term nature of the funding has been a major barrier, and the $2,000 fee may limit the number of agencies who are able to participate in the model.

The director also reported several implementation problems from the pilot and the current fee-based training program. First, center directors are responsible for selecting staff members to take part in the training, and

because there is no formalized selection process or policy, staff members who are not selected can be resentful. In addition, mentors and protégés, who work in the same centers, report having insufficient time to meet, partly because substitutes are provided only at the director's discretion and are not a requirement of the program model. Staff who participate in the training have expressed concern about a variety of issues, including the level of responsibility, the time requirement, the extensive observation of their skills and classroom/home environments, and the lack of compensation, benefits or professional recognition from the program. Child care programs which believe in the professional benefits of mentoring are trying to resolve some of these issues in order to continue offering mentoring services to new staff.

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## Detroit-Wayne County Family Child Care Mentoring Program Detroit, Michigan

### SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Detroit-Wayne County Family Child Care Mentoring Program, which operated from 1992 to 1994, recruited family child care providers to complete basic training and to identify their areas of strength or specialization, such as science projects, infants and toddlers, or business management. These providers then served as mentors by opening their homes for visits during specified hours of operation and by working one-on-one with less experienced providers.

An inspiration for the program was providers' expression of interest in additional training, offered at convenient times, in child development and professionalism. Mentoring also served as an ideal method to provide cost-effective training specific to the needs of both experienced and new providers. The program was administered by the Child Care Coordinating Council (4C) of Detroit-Wayne County, Inc., and served a total of 40 mentors and 37 protégés. Collaborators included Wheelock College, the Kellogg Foundation, School Craft College, Madonna College, Wayne County Community College, the Department of Social Services, and Highland Park Community College. NCECW interviewed the former program coordinator at 4C.

### ELIGIBILITY

The program required mentors to be licensed; to have been in business for at least 18 months; and to have completed at least 15 hours of early childhood education (which could include continuing education classes, certification programs, conferences, and/or workshops), along with training in infant CPR and first aid. Mentors were asked to make a commitment of at least one year. Protégés were required to be family child care providers who had enrolled in or completed 4C training.

**OUTREACH**

The program coordinator recruited mentors through professional organizations, and also publicized the program in the 4C newsletter. Word of mouth proved to be the most effective means of recruitment.

**SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS**

The program coordinator and other program administrators interviewed interested applicants by phone, asking about candidates' education, expertise, interest in working with less experienced providers, and ability to make a one-year commitment. The coordinator then produced a list of mentors and their professional strengths, and referred protégés to specific mentors based on protégés' needs and interests. She also mailed the list of mentors and their professional strengths to the protégé after the phone conversation.

**TRAINING OF MENTORS**

Mentors participated in a two-hour training session, with an opportunity for questions and networking. Training covered topics requested by providers, including child development, professional development, and mentoring skills. Child development subjects included guidance and discipline, parent communication and developmentally appropriate practices. Participants also discussed the role of the mentor, the appropriate availability of the mentor, and the content areas involved in earning the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. Training was offered free of charge to participants (primarily mentors, along with several protégés), but no college credit was available.

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR PROTÉGÉS**

Protégés contacted mentors by phone, made a commitment to spending three hours with the mentor in her home (with a minimum of one hour when the children were present), identified specific learning interests in regard to operating a family child care home, and participated in periodic group meetings with other mentors and protégés for the purpose of sharing experiences and making suggestions to enhance the program.

**COMPENSATION**

Mentors received no compensation for their work with protégés.

**PROGRAM FUNDING**

The program received matching grants from the Kellogg Foundation and Wheelock College which totaled $40,000 from 1992 to 1994.

**PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING**

According to the program coordinator, 4C received only informal feedback on the program's effect on mentors and protégés.

**SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS**

The program coordinator identified three primary accomplishments of the program. First, it decreased the isolation of the family child care field by linking experienced and inexperienced providers for training and technical assistance. Second, providers felt that they had grown professionally as a result of the project, they expressed satisfaction with having a forum for sharing and communication, and many still communicate with each another regularly. Third, the training provided useful information, including a community directory of mentors and protégés compiled by the program coordinator.

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## Early Childhood Model/ Mentor Teacher Program Chapel Hill, North Carolina

### SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Early Childhood Model/Mentor Teacher Program provides training in mentoring and leadership skills to experienced teachers who have obtained degrees in early childhood education or child development. Child care centers and family child care homes which sponsor model/mentor teachers then serve as student practicum sites for participating community colleges. This program is administered by Day Care Services Association, Inc., as part of the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Project, which awards scholarships to early childhood teachers and providers to help defray costs associated with course work towards earning their credentials or degrees. NCECW interviewed the program coordinator and executive director at Day Care Services Association.

### ELIGIBILITY

Candidates to become model/mentor teachers must meet several minimum requirements: they must be currently working at least 30 hours a week in a licensed child care center or registered family child care home where they have worked for at least a year, have completed a two-year or four-year degree in early childhood education or a related field, and have a minimum of two years of child care experience. Protégés must be students enrolled in a practicum course at a participating community college.

### OUTREACH

To recruit mentors, Day Care Services Association mails program information and applications to all licensed centers and registered family child care homes in selected areas of the state. Resource and referral agencies and community college early childhood education coordinators also provide program materials to their clients and students. In addition, the program sends packets to teachers in targeted geographic areas who

have just completed their A.A. through the Associate's Degree Scholarship Program. Protégés are generally recruited by course instructors and/or the early childhood coordinator at their community college.

**SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS**

Candidates for model/mentor teacher submit an application which includes information on their background, references, and brief essays. If eligible, they then participate in candidate interviews and classroom observations. Candidates complete a course entitled "Early Childhood Leadership Through Mentoring" at a selected community college. The early childhood coordinator at each participating community college selects protégés and matches them with appropriate model/mentors.

**TRAINING FOR MENTORS**

In addition to "Early Childhood Leadership Through Mentoring," which is offered for three graduate or undergraduate credits, mentors take a course entitled "Teachers as Leaders." The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Project awards scholarships to mentors covering 50 percent of the cost of tuition for the course, the full cost of books, and a travel stipend. The model/mentor's sponsoring center adds 25 percent of the cost of tuition.

**COMPENSATION**

Model/mentor teachers receive a total of $700 in bonuses during their first mentoring year, of which $200 is provided by their sponsoring center. The following year, a three-percent salary enhancement is contributed by their center.

**PROGRAM FUNDING**

For the first cohort of mentors, the program began with a budget of $32,000 provided by federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds. The second cohort was funded through corporate contributions, and the third was supported by the state General Assembly as part of the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Project. Since the budget for the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Project (which totaled nearly $1 million for 1994-95) encompasses the Model/Mentor program, it is difficult to estimate the mentor budget in isolation. As of November 1995, the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Project has funded a total of 3,190 scholarships, of which 44 have been awarded to model/mentors.

**PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING**

Program participants complete an annual survey which documents their and their sponsoring centers' level of satisfaction with the program. In addition, the program collects information on model/mentors' salaries, educational background, relevant work experience, length of employment and household income. The program also collects data on the salary progression in participating centers. No longitudinal evaluation is planned at this time.

**SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS**

According to the program coordinator and the executive director of Day Care Services Association, the major obstacle in implementing the program effectively has been identifying teachers who meet minimum education requirements. Although many teachers express interest in the program, very few have received a two- or four-year degree. The college coordinators report that the program's greatest success has been the contribution of model/mentors in helping early childhood students to improve their caregiving skills.

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# Family Day Care Outreach Program
# Acton, Massachusetts

## SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Family Day Care Outreach Program, which was in operation from June 1991 to June 1993, identified family child care providers in specified low-income communities to serve as mentors to other low-income women who were interested in becoming licensed providers. The program targeted low-income segments of otherwise high-income communities which had not received public funds to improve and increase the supply of child care. Research in these communities indicated a demand for more family child care, especially for programs serving linguistic minorities. The program was supported entirely by a grant from United Way of Greater Boston through the Child Care Careers Institute at Wheelock College. Over its two years of operation, the program selected a total of nine mentors who worked with 19 protégés for nine months each. NCECW interviewed the program coordinator at Child Care Search, one of two collaborating organizations (along with the Newton Community Service Center) that administered the program.

## ELIGIBILITY

The program coordinators sought mentor candidates who were experienced in caring for children, were licensed as family child care providers or interested in becoming licensed, could develop an informal network of providers in the community, and were available for and committed to a free training program on child development. After further research, however, the coordinators determined that there were no providers meeting these qualifications in the region selected for the first year of the pilot program, and as result they modified the eligibility requirements. They recruited persons who had significant experience caring for children and exhibited good communication skills. In the second year, the program operated in a region with significant numbers of licensed providers, many of whom were serving ethnic communities in need of child care in families' native languages. As a result, 12 licensed candidates submitted applications.

**OUTREACH**

In the first year, the program put up flyers in low-income housing areas, community centers and churches, inviting those who were interested in becoming mentors to an evening coffee hour and orientation. In the second year, the program targeted other low-income communities, and sent a mass mailing to all licensed child care providers in those areas.

**SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS**

After the orientation meeting, each candidate submitted a written application with two references and was then interviewed by the program coordinators. The application included a brief essay on the applicant's experience in caring for children, her involvement in the community, the length of time she had lived in her present neighborhood, her access to community resources, and the qualities that would make her a good mentor. In interviewing candidates, the program coordinators looked for elements that were not easily quantifiable, such as warmth and charisma. The two coordinators worked well as a team, in that one had significant family child care experience and the other was experienced in program administration. In the first year, the program had seven applicants, of whom four were selected, but it had difficulty finding applicants from ethnic and linguistic minorities. In the second year, five out of 12 candidates were selected, representing three languages other than English (Russian, Farsi and Haitian Creole).

**TRAINING OF MENTORS**

Only the mentors attended the first three training sessions. Topics at these two-hour small-group sessions included principles of adult learning, mentoring skills, support group development, and creative outreach strategies. There was then a six-week pause in the program while mentors recruited protégés, and the remaining seven training sessions were attended by both mentors and protégés. Topics included a two-session overview of child development and behavior management strategies; designing a family child care environment; health and safety; identification of special needs in young children; developmentally appropriate activities and materials; and an informal session in which the group shared information about community resources (e.g. favorite playgrounds, etc.). Another of the primary goals was to help providers become licensed, and a licenser came to speak at one session. In the second year, when trainees spoke several languages besides English, the trainers delivered the course material in English and it was translated into other languages in

different parts of the room. Training was provided free of charge, but r college credit was available for completion.

**COMPENSATION**

Mentors were asked to sign a formal contract, in which the program agreed to pay them a stipend of $750 for their involvement in the nine-month training process and their assistance in identifying and recruiting other providers in the community.

**PROGRAM FUNDING**

United Way, on behalf of a collaboration of private foundations, provided financial support for the program, in addition to in-kind contributions from Child Care Search and the Newton Community Service Center for administrative costs. The total budget over two years was $40,000 — $16,000 in the first year and $23,900 in the second. The budget included funds to help family child care providers modify their homes to meet licensing regulations, compensation for mentors, and trainers' fees.

**PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING**

The coordinators collected information on participants' ethnicity, socioeconomic status, highest level of education achieved, age, and previous employment related to young children. In addition, the Heller School at Brandeis University conducted an evaluation of the program, among all of the other Child Care Careers Institute projects. The tools they developed, however, were designed for center-based projects, and thus were not entirely relevant to family child care.

**SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS**

According to the program coordinator, the program succeeded in assisting linguistic minorities in becoming licensed providers, and established networks of licensed providers where previously there had been no licensed care. The Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare also studies this model as a way of increasing the supply of family child care in low-income communities and as an intervention strategy for welfare recipients. Obstacles included the restrictions that the initial proposal placed on location, as the program ended up serving pockets of linguistic minorities who did not necessarily live in the targeted communities. In addition, the initial collaboration with an organization representing the Hispanic community fell through because of staff turnover. Third, everyday barriers such as illness, changes in situation, etc. caused a few participants

to drop out. Finally, a tendency to distrust unfamiliar service agencies, whether governmental or not, was a barrier to participation to some extent.

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# Finders/Seekers Home Day Care Mentor Program South Paris, Maine

### SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Finders/Seekers Home Day Care Mentor Program, which is no longer funded as of September 30, 1995, trained family child care providers to help less experienced providers become licensed and improve their skills. The program recruited mentors to work one-on-one with protégés and to participate in training programs. It was created in 1993 as part of a Family Systems Grant designed to promote family child care licensing, and also received federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds through the state Bureau of Child and Family Services. The program trained 21 mentors, who worked with over 50 protégés. NCECW interviewed the program's trainer, and additional information was provided by the program coordinator.

### ELIGIBILITY

Mentors were required to be currently licensed and in operation as family child care providers, and to have a minimum of two years of experience, as well as some formal or informal early childhood education background.

### OUTREACH

Finders/Seekers sent a brochure to all licensed providers describing the training opportunities it offered, including the Mentor Program, but the trainer reported that word of mouth and personal invitations were the most powerful methods of recruitment.

### SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS

Candidates submitted a written application and were interviewed by the coordinator. The application included questions on their background, their reasons for wishing to become a mentor, and the strengths and skills they wished to share. All applicants were accepted because of the limited pool of candidates.

**TRAINING FOR MENTORS**

The training was initially offered as a five-part series, but later evolved into a weekend retreat. The topics covered included definitions of quality child care; professionalism in the family child care field; effective business practices such as contracts and record-keeping; resource sharing on community services; communication skills with parents; adult learning styles; taking care of oneself; and setting limits. Participants also engaged in practice sessions for one-on-one mentoring and group work.

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR PROTÉGÉS**

Protégés phoned the Resource Development Center, a child care resource and referral agency, which linked them with a mentor, or they could call mentors directly. Generally mentors and protégés were matched with each other based on the location of their homes and their common interests. The program covered the mentor's stipend for 10 hours of work with a protégé; beyond that point, the mentor and protégé could work out their own fee arrangement if they wished to continue working together.

**COMPENSATION**

Mentors were paid a stipend of $10 per hour for up to ten hours of work with a protégé, and were reimbursed for transportation costs. (In the first year of the program, they were paid $6 per hour and the number of hours allowed was open-ended.) Mentors could also become Finders/Seekers trainers and earn $50 per two-hour workshop.

**PROGRAM FUNDING**

The program received support from the Bureau of Child and Family Services, Department of Human Services of the State of Maine. In addition, Catholic Charities supported the program's initial development. The total budget from Department of Human Services funding was $20,146, which covered adminstrative costs, mentor stipends, and reimbursement of mentors' transportation. The costs of training and accommodations for the retreat were supported by other sources.

**PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING**

The program collected information on the location of mentors' and protégés' homes, the ages of children they served, their educational

background, their fees, the licensing status of protégés, and the type and number of training sessions conducted by mentors.

**SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS**

According to the trainer, the major accomplishment of the program was the intensive training, personal support, and recognition of mentors engendered by the retreat--an all-expenses-paid weekend which allowed them time to develop as professionals. The obstacles that the program encountered included the short-term nature of funding sources for mentor training, and the difficulty of creating an ongoing communication network with and among mentors.

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# Massachusetts Early Childhood Mentor Teacher Project, Boston, Massachusetts

### SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Massachusetts Early Childhood Mentor Teacher Project, in operation from September 1991 to May 1994, was a collaborative program that selected qualified early childhood mentors from community-based centers and provided them with an intensive two-year education to grow as leaders in their classrooms and communities. The project received private support from a consortium of foundations led by the Massachusetts Bay United Way through a grant to the Child Care Careers Institute. It was administered by a collaborative led by Associated Day Care Services of Metropolitan Boston, in partnership with South Shore Day Care Services and Wheelock College. Over the two years of operation, 15 mentors were selected to work with 25 protégés. NCECW interviewed the project's training coordinator at Wheelock College.

### ELIGIBILITY

Mentors were required to be certified as lead teachers, which in Massachusetts involves at least three years of teaching experience and four college courses in early childhood education; as a group, mentors were also selected to represent the region's economic, racial and cultural diversity. Protégés were required to be full-time center-based teachers with less experience and/or education than their mentors.

### OUTREACH

The program recruited mentors through a mass mailing to licensed full-day child care centers and through members of the Child Care Careers Institute.

### SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS

A culturally and racially diverse committee was chosen from across agencies and programs to review applications, and to interview and

select candidates. The selection committee included representatives of the collaborating agencies, child care center directors, and early childhood teachers. Applicants wrote brief essays on why they wished to be mentors, and supplied references from their current director and one current or former colleague. The selection committee had planned to observe applicants' classrooms using Harms and Clifford's Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS), but timing did not allow for review of all candidates' classrooms.

Associated Day Care Services managed outreach to and selection of protégés, who completed applications and supplied references from their directors. South Shore Day Care Services conducied evaluation and community liaison efforts. Wheelock College coordinated the education component.

**TRAINING OF MENTORS**

Mentors were involved in a two-year, four-semester training program. In round two, they participated for one semester in the spring of 1994. In the first year of their training, the mentors took evening courses on "Adult Development in the Early to Middle Years," and on "The Mentor Teacher in Early Childhood Settings," both offered for three undergraduate or graduate credits. Field work with protégés began in the fall of the second year of training. Mentors attended a three-credit seminar entitled "Mentoring Theory and Practice, Part I," consisting of five four-hour group sessions over a semester, held on the same days that mentors met with protégés. "Mentoring Theory and Practice, Part II" (also for three credits) was conducted during the second half of the field work, and consisted of seven briefer group sessions over the spring semester. The final, two-credit course was called "Mentoring Roles in Leadership Development," and was designed to help mentors cultivate leadership and advocacy skills, and train them to present workshops at conferences. Mentors earned a total of 14 credits, and the training was provided tuition-free. Mentors from the project continue to teach workshops at conferences in the region, and the project has developed a video which has been used in course work.

**COMPENSATION**

Mentor teachers received a total stipend of $2,000 (provided in $500 increments upon completion of each of the first four courses), along with an honorarium of $750, and a budget of $500 for classroom materials which they could either keep or give to their protégés. The honorarium was awarded at the end of the fifth course for mentors to spend either in

attending workshops or as reimbursement for travel and other expenses. All books and related materials were paid for by the project.

Protégés were not compensated, but their programs received materials and reimbursement for the cost of substitutes.

### PROGRAM FUNDING

The total budget from 1991 to 1994 was $173,500, which was completely provided through private Child Care Careers Institute funds. The budget covered mentors' training and compensation, materials and project administration.

### PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING

The Child Care Careers Institute implemented an evaluation while the project was in operation, and results are available from the Institute. The coordinating agencies also collected information on mentor demographics which is housed at the Institute.

### SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS

According to the training coordinator, the project accomplished several objectives: it boosted mentors' and protégés' professional growth and self-identity, it educated a cadre of mentor leaders determined to expand the program's impact across the state, and it developed a comprehensive curriculum and resources that are adaptable to a variety of program models. The program model was also later adapted and replicated in Milwaukee (see profile of the Milwaukee Early Childhood Mentor Teacher Program, elsewhere in this report).

The training coordinator also identified several challenges that the project faced: the lack of continued funding for program expansion, the complexity of administration, a lesser degree of ongoing contact with protégés, lack of college credit for protégés' involvement, length of the project, and turnover of collaborators.

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## Mentor/Partner Project
## Alexandria, Virginia

### SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Mentor/Partner Project trains and pairs family child care providers, who work together to improve the quality of care offered in their homes. The main goals for the program are to improve family child care training resources, to increase the number of providers, to strengthen communication among providers, and to foster leadership in the provider network. The Office for Early Childhood Development, a City of Alexandria agency, administers the program, which is subsidized by the city in addition to private support. The program is sponsored and funded by the Advisory Committee on Family Care (ACFC), which was jointly formed by Bell Atlantic and two labor unions, the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). The program began in January 1995 and has placed ten experienced providers as mentors for ten protégés (called "partners"). NCECW interviewed the project coordinator, a staff member at the Office for Early Childhood Development.

### ELIGIBILITY

Mentor providers must be registered with the city and approved as vendors, and must have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, an A.A. degree, accreditation from the National Association for Family Child Care, or a state license. Protégés are required to be registered with the city and approved as vendors. The project coordinator is also the person responsible for the city's family child care training series, which is a prerequisite to becoming registered and approved as a vendor.

### OUTREACH

At the beginning of the project the coordinator met with the two social workers who monitor the city-sponsored family child care homes, and together they identified new providers who had the potential to be

mentors. They then sent letters to 35 candidates, asking if they were interested in becoming mentors or partners for the project.

### SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS

Out of these 35 mentor candidates, 21 responded, and all were interviewed and visited in their homes, with the help of a Mentor Liaison. Interviewers asked candidates what they felt they had to offer to new providers, and what kind of additional services they felt the project might offer. Ten mentors were then selected to work with ten partners, whose homes were assessed using the Family Day Care Environmental Rating Scale (FDCERS) developed by Harms and Clifford. The project made an effort to locate at least one mentor in each of the city 's zip code areas and ethnic communities, and to identify candidates' homes that could serve as model environments for training new providers.

### TRAINING FOR MENTORS

The project has contracted with the Children's Foundation to provide training sessions to mentors, which includes the following subjects: building positive relationships, successful communication skills, observation and feedback techniques, and professional growth and resources. The training, which does not carry college-level credit, is offered in four two-hour sessions over four weeks.

### TRAINING FOR PROTÉGÉS

The second phase of the project started with an orientation and reception for mentors and partners at which the trainers presented information about the program model. At the end of the reception, mentors fielded requests from partners on their priorities for improvement in the coming month, and each pair reached agreement on a theme that they would explore at the next meeting. Each mentor/partner team received a portfolio to record their questions and observations in each other's homes.

### MENTORS' WORK WITH PROTÉGÉS

Subsequently, mentors and partners have been in contact through telephone calls and visits for an average of six hours per month over a six-month period. The mentor visits the partner's home first, after which they alternate. The project also recommends that the mentor and partner be in contact with each other at least once a week. Some pairs have found it difficult to schedule visits, and the project has therefore placed higher

priority on collaboration than on observation, meaning that some sessions have taken place when children are not present.

Once the mentoring process has begun, the project holds three two-hour support group sessions for mentors and partners to share questions and responses that have come up during the month, and to introduce the issue for the following month. Subjects of exploration and discussion have included the child care environment, activity planning, parent education, resource development, and professional activities. One of the sessions outlined the network of professional organizations that can support family child care providers, and encouraged participants to play an advocacy role at all levels, especially in regard to proposed changes in state child care regulations. The program has not planned an ongoing support network for the mentor/partner teams, but hopes that they will continue to work together.

**COMPENSATION**

Mentors receive $10 per training session (including the mentor training class, the reception, and the support group sessions) for a total of $100. Partners receive a total of $50 for their participation in the support groups. Although visits in each other's homes are not compensated, the project does reimburse mentors and partners for substitutes and transportation costs.

**PROGRAM FUNDING**

The total budget for the program is $5,000 from private funds through the Bell Atlantic Partnership Group. In addition, the program receives support from the Office for Early Childhood Development for the coordinator's salary. The budget covers compensation for mentors and partners ($2,500 annually), the training of mentors ($1,000), materials for mentors and partners ($1,000), and reimbursement for transportation and substitutes ($500).

The $1,000 materials budget allows each mentor and partner to receive $50 for materials to be selected from resource catalogs. Each mentor/partner team identifies specific items to enhance the curriculum in their home environments and then prioritize their options; they can either focus specifically on the partner's home or pool the funds.

**PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING**

The Office for Early Childhood Development has information available on the providers' applications for approval as vendors, but has not yet compiled it. The project coordinator also collects information on mentors' special skills, training, language abilities and interests, with the goal of developing a mentor and partner data base. The project also plans to reassess partners' homes with the FDCERS scale to record any changes as a result of their involvement in the program, and plans to develop a questionnaire for mentors and partners on implementation issues. Finally, the project will ask the two program monitors of city vendors for feedback on issues they see in the community at large and on this group of providers in particular. To date, the informal feedback from the project has been positive, and many providers have expressed an interest in taking part in a similar project.

**SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS**

The primary successes thus far, according to the project coordinator, have been overcoming isolation and increasing self-esteem among family child care providers. Transportation and family responsibilities appear to have been the major obstacles in the first year, especially for partners, and cultural issues in communication between mentors and partners remain an ongoing challenge.

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## The Mentor Program
## Albany, Oregon

### SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Mentor Program selects family child care providers as mentors, provides them with eight to ten hours of training, and pays them a stipend of $100 for eight to ten hours of work with protégés. Linn-Benton Community College administers the program with funding from the Council for Children, which is the local funding agency for the federal Child and Adult Care Food Program. The program began in the fall of 1994 and has placed five protégés with five mentors. NCECW interviewed the program coordinator at Linn-Benton Community College.

### ELIGIBILITY

Mentor candidates must be members of a professional organization, must be listed with a resource and referral agency, and must have completed some state-sponsored training. Protégés need to have enough experience to show a commitment to family child care, and must participate in the food program.

### OUTREACH

The program recruits mentors and protégés through the Linn-Benton Community College resource and referral agency newsletter, and the Council for Children also recommends mentor and protégé candidates.

### SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS

Mentor candidates submit applications with information on their experience and educational background, along with a personal essay. The program coordinator and her supervisor reviewed and approved all five candidates' applications.

### TRAINING OF MENTORS

Mentors participate in eight to ten hours of training which focuses on the following topics: resources available at the resource and referral agency to share with one's protégé, the role of a mentor, and strategies to provide criticism and share information sensitively. The first eight hours of training were conducted before mentors were matched with protégés, and the final two hours were conducted after mentoring began.

### MENTORS' WORK WITH PROTÉGÉS

Mentors spend eight to ten hours working with their protégés, including at least two hours at the mentor's home, at least two hours at the protégé's home, and no more than two hours on the phone. During the initial meeting they set goals in the areas where the protégé feels she needs the most help. The general program objectives are quality improvement and increased professionalism. Placements thus far have been made based on geographic proximity, but in the next phase the coordinator will create a questionnaire for mentors and protégés listing areas of strength and needs for improvement. Placements will then be based upon these questionnaires, without reference to the participants' identity.

### COMPENSATION

Mentors receive a stipend of $100 for ten hours of work with protégés over a three-month period.

### PROGRAM FUNDING

The Council for Children, which is supported by food program funds, provided a $1,000 grant to the Mentor Program, and other funds were raised at a Fall Festival. The budget has covered stipends for ten mentors, although only five had participated at the time of the interview, and it was unclear at that time whether the grant would be renewed at the end of the one-year commitment.

### PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING

The coordinator collected anecdotal evaluations from mentors and protégés and generally received very positive feedback.

**SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS**

When asked about the program's achievements, the coordinator responded that one of the goals is retention, and four of the five protégés are still active in the field. The primary barrier has been the matching process between mentors and protégés; one match suffered because the process did not provide for enough screening.

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## Milwaukee Early Childhood Mentor Teacher Program, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

### SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Milwaukee Early Childhood Mentor Teacher Program selects qualified mentors in child care centers and family child care homes. Upon selection, mentors enroll in a two-credit seminar to prepare them for their new role. Protégés from both centers and family child care homes also complete applications, which are scored by the selection committee and used to match them with mentors. Once the placement begins, mentors and protégés enroll in a three-credit course which structures and enhances their one-on-one work in the field. Mentors and protégés also receive stipends to offset the costs of the course and to pay for classroom/home materials. In two years of program operation, 26 protégés have been placed with 25 mentors, and 21 centers and five family child care homes have been involved. Participation by mentors and protégés is limited to one semester, and the program is trying to develop an ongoing mentor network. NCECW interviewed the program director at Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC).

### ELIGIBILITY

For center-based child care mentor teachers, the program requires:

- two years of experience in a full-day regulated child care center, serving children ages birth through six;
- lead teacher status for at least one year; and
- a minimum of 12 credits in early childhood education from an approved institution, or a Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate plus six credits.

For family child care mentor providers, the program requires:

- 100 hours of child care training from an approved institution or agency, including completion of Windflower's Second Helping course (which represents 40 of the 100 hours);
- accreditation with the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association or the National Association for Family Child Care; and
- five years of experience with demonstrated leadership.

Protégés also have minimum requirements for involvement in the program:

- at least one year of experience in a center or family child care home, and current employment in a licensed program serving children from birth to six years of age; and
- lead teacher status, if center-based, which implies a minimum of 80 hours of training, or, if a family child care provider, a minimum of 40 hours of training.

**OUTREACH**

The program coordinator mails information to all licensed centers and family child care homes in Milwaukee County, and visits centers and homes to publicize the program. She also makes presentations at professional conferences and early childhood organization meetings.

**SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS**

Qualified mentor candidates complete a written application, which includes information on their educational background, work experience in early childhood education, reasons for applying to be a mentor, and career and education plan, as well as such information about their program as the population of children served and caregiving approaches. Priority is given to applicants serving low-income populations and serving children in their primary language. As part of the application, directors agree to comply with program requirements and to guarantee a wage increase for mentors and protégés upon completion of the semester. In addition to the written application, NAEYC validators observe applicants' classrooms using the sections of the accreditation process that focus on curriculum and on staff interactions with children. A selection committee reflecting the community's diversity reviews all applications, including the results of the classroom assessment, to select qualified mentors. Protégés complete written applications with similar information. The selection committee chooses qualified applicants and then places

protégés with mentors based on the ages of children served, geographic proximity, and ease of transportation.

### TRAINING OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS

After being selected, mentors enroll in the two-credit "Milwaukee Early Childhood Mentor Seminar." Seminar topics include adult and teacher development, defining mentor roles, effective communication, anti-bias staff development, use of the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale, observation and assessment, professionalism, and advocacy.

Protégés and mentors are matched when mentors have completed the first semester. In the second semester, mentors and protégés enroll in the three-credit course, "Mentors and Protégés at Work: Applying Theory to Practice," which includes four hours per week of field work and two hours per week in class.

Mentors earn a total of five undergraduate credits, and protégés earn three credits.

### COMPENSATION

During the semester when they are involved in the program, mentors receive a stipend of $500 to cover tuition costs and related expenses (a net stipend of $240). Protégés receive reimbursement for the actual cost of tuition, provided they receive at least a B grade, and a grant of $150 for classroom materials. Upon completion of the program, center directors are required to increase mentors' and protégés' wages, and family child care providers are encouraged to raise their rates.

### PROGRAM FUNDING

The Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services' program of Child Care Technical Assistance and Training Grants provides the bulk of financial support, with the exception of instructors' salaries which are now paid by MATC. In the first year of operation (October 1993 to September 1994), the program had a total budget of $100,000, and for the second year (October 1994 to September 1995) the budget was $83,000. Funding is renewed annually. The program budget includes funding for mentor stipends, reimbursement of protégés' tuition, grants for classroom/home materials, reimbursement for substitutes, and stipends for selection committee members..

**PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING**

An independent evaluator from the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee conducted a survey of mentors and protégés before and after their involvement in the program, and a six-month follow-up for the first-year cohort is planned. As a result, the program has information on changes in participants' attitudes and perceptions, but not on changes in classroom environments or teaching styles. The evaluation highlighted the participants' feelings about the program, including its effect on career plans, income potential, teaching skills and professional identity. The coordinator also collects information on participants' educational levels, income levels, race, wage increases, and enrollment in continuing education. This data has not yet been compiled to provide a profile on the participants.

**SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS**

The results of the survey indicated that mentors enhanced their professional identity, intended to stay in child care longer, had a new career plan, and felt a sense of reward due to higher income potential. Protégés saw themselves as better learners, intended to stay in child care longer, and intended to pursue higher education. Networking and getting out of their own centers were beneficial to both mentors and protégés. The program also succeeded in building unity between centers and family child care homes.

In terms of barriers, the program has struggled to develop strategies to keep mentors involved after their protégés' placement ends. The program coordinator plans to establish a mentor network; the mentors also distributed a list of services--such as in-service training, mentoring, CDA advising, and consultation-- that they can offer to the community on a fee-for-service basis, and the coordinator is seeking funds for mentors to work as cooperating teachers at MATC.

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# The Minnesota Child Care Apprentice/ Mentor Program, Minneapolis and Rochester, Minnesota

## SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Minnesota Child Care Apprentice/Mentor Program, begun in 1993 in Minneapolis and now being replicated in Rochester, selects pairs of mentors and apprentices who work at the same child care center and apply as a team. Mentors receive a stipend and partial reimbursement of tuition for course work on adult development, leadership and mentoring skills. Apprentices work one-on-one with mentors for two years (4,000 hours), and receive a 90-percent college tuition reimbursement for 30 credits of course work toward a certificate in early childhood education. In addition, apprentices receive regular wage increases during their participation in the program, and upon completion, their centers must pay them the wage goal (a minimum of $8.00 per hour for the first group). The program has two cohorts of mentor-apprentice teams to date: the 1994-96 cohort includes 11 pairs, and the 1995-97 cohort includes 13 pairs.

The program was developed by center directors and teachers, Minneapolis Technical College, the state Department of Labor and Industry's apprenticeship division, the Department of Human Services, the Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, and other child care advocacy organizations. Collaborators developed the program in order to improve the compensation of early childhood teachers, reduce turnover, and improve the quality of child care services. Concurrently, the Technical College was developing an articulation agreement to standardize early childhood course work and to transfer credit among institutions. The Apprentice/Mentor program has been incorporated into the Technical College's certificate requirement of 30 credits (25 course credits and 5 credits of field work), and these credits will eventually be accepted at any college that is part of the articulation agreement.

NCECW interviewed the program director, who is also the Director of Center Management Services for the Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association.

**ELIGIBILITY**

The program requires that mentors work in the same center as the apprentice, and that they apply as a team. Mentors are required to qualify as teachers under state licensing regulations, have a minimum of two years of head teacher experience and three years experience in the child care field, have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or 24 college credits in early childhood education, and be familiar with developmentally appropriate practice, as demonstrated by an assessment with the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale.

Protégés must be 16 years of age, work 30 to 40 hours per week in the center, and complete a criminal background check; if they have completed previous course work, the program allows them to finish on an accelerated time schedule. In the future, the program may also require a GED as a minimum educational background.

**OUTREACH**

The program recruits both mentors and protégés by sending brochures to all licensed child care centers in the county and to members of professional organizations outside the county. It also distributes materials and brochures at Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association training sessions. The program makes specific efforts to recruit persons of color, in the belief that existing recruitment practices in the community have generally reinforced the promotion of white caregivers only. The program also recruits at welfare reform and job placement agencies, using funds to train and place welfare recipients in centers. The applicants in the first cohort came primarily from the centers which had helped develop the program model.

**SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS**

The mentor and apprentice prepare and submit the application together; the advisory committee then reviews the applications and decides which candidates qualify for a site visit. In the first year, 25 teams applied and 12 were accepted; in the second, eight teams applied and six were accepted. In the second year the program was supported by funds directed toward the inner city, and all applicants were either persons of color or were working with children affected by violence. At the time of NCECW's interview in mid-1995, the Rochester site was just in the process of recruiting eight mentor/apprentice pairs.

### TRAINING OF MENTORS

Mentors take a four-credit course offered through Metropolitan State University, and topics include guidance, feedback, support and advocacy for one's apprentice; principles and practices of effective communication; advocacy and community resources; problem solving; cultural dynamics; adult learning styles; time management; leadership; and selected issues in early childhood education including professional ethics, working with special needs children, and the impacts of violence.

The Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association offers six hours of in-service anti-bias training for both mentors and protégés, and is also considering implementing the Leadership Empowerment (LEAP) curriculum now being developed by NCECW. Further, the program hopes to build leadership by identifying mentors and apprentices to make presentations about it at conferences. Two mentors and two apprentices also serve as advisors on the program's training committee.

### TRAINING OF PROTÉGÉS

The protégés earn 30 credits over two years at Minneapolis Technical College or at Riverland Technical College in Rochester. They have a two-year (4,000 hour) formal apprenticeship agreement with the mentor and the center. There is no limit on the number of repeat matches a mentor can provide.

### COMPENSATION

Mentors receive a stipend of $179 from the Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association which covers 70 percent their tuition, and earn four college credits. The project pays 80 percent of apprentices' tuition, and the apprentices and the child care centers each pay 10 percent.

Sponsoring centers also cover 75 percent of apprentices' wage increases, and the overall program covers 25 percent. For the first cohort, centers had to pay apprentices at least $8.00 per hour by the end of the program, with regular increases occurring every six months. A secondary effect of the program, too, is that participating centers have tended to feel obligated to raise their minimum salary for all teachers to $8.00 per hour. Apprentices average about $2,000 in wage upgrades over the two years.

Mentors also receive a stipend of $2,080 over two years, but there is no formal commitment from centers to increase mentors' salaries.

The program reimburses the cost of substitutes to allow apprentices and mentors to meet weekly without classroom obligations, at a cost of $1,456 per center over the two years. The program also pays for apprentices' books, at an average cost of $230 over two years, as well as bus or parking passes and child care to help apprentices attend evening classes.

**PROGRAM FUNDING**

The total budget per year is about $100,000 for a total of 26 pairs as of July 1995. This amount includes start-up funds for eight apprentice/mentor pairs in the Rochester program. The primary funding source is the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), with additional support from state apprenticeship funds and a county unemployment-to-work program.

**PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING**

The program collects semiannual data on participating centers, apprentices and mentors, including wages and educational background of staff. Apprentices' grades from their college course work, an on-the-job assessment by their mentor, and a short reflective paper are included in the apprentices' evaluation. Mentors receive a grade for their course work and are evaluated by their apprentices.

**SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS**

The program director reports that the major successes have been keeping the project funded, and helping apprentices to continue their education and stay in the child care field in spite of major obstacles in their lives. Program barriers have included an overwhelming time commitment for the apprentices, some of whom are concurrently completing a GED, taking college courses, and working full time in a child care center; recruiting people of color (e.g. only five apprentices and three mentors in the first cohort are people of color); and administrative staff turnover (three program managers in a year and a half of operation). The requirement that centers increase apprentices' wages to at least $8.00 per hour may also become a barrier to participation, as the centers that appear most receptive to such a commitment may be a small pool from which to recruit.

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## Model Early Childhood Mentor Project Richmond, VA

### SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

This program, which was in operation from 1992 to 1995, selected five NAEYC-accredited centers to serve as mentor sites to other centers ("protégé sites") in the region. Protégé sites applied to mentor sites for assistance; mentor sites then sent individual staff members to visit and conduct guided assessments. In response to this assessment, protégé sites set goals for improvement and developed action plans, and the mentor and protégé centers signed one-year technical assistance contracts. While mentor sites each served for three years, protégé centers received a maximum of one year of technical assistance. The general goal of the program was to improve the overall quality of care at protégé centers; several protégé sites also ended up pursuing NAEYC accreditation. In 1994-95, five mentor sites (with a total of 34 staff members) worked with 217 staff members, serving 2,308 children, at 24 protégé sites.

The Virginia Council on Child Day Care and Early Childhood Programs-- the state's designated lead agency for allocation of federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds--developed and administered this program model in collaboration with the Virginia Department of Social Services (particularly the Division of Licensing) and the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. NCECW interviewed the program coordinator, a staff member of the Virginia Council on Child Day Care and Early Childhood Programs, shortly before the program ended.

### ELIGIBILITY

Mentor centers were either accredited by NAEYC or had begun the self-review process towards accreditation. Mentor sites were allowed to decide whether or not all staff members, ranging from aides to directors, would be designated as individual mentors. Only centers which had voluntarily requested assistance could participate as protégés.

**OUTREACH**

The Council recruited accredited mentor sites through NAEYC mailing lists, and through mailings to other early childhood professional organizations with separate accreditation processes. To recruit protégé centers, the Council sent out a mailing to all licensed centers and professional organizations; some sites also learned of the program by word of mouth.

**SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS**

In applying to the Council, mentoring sites needed to demonstrate their ability to provide comprehensive services both to children and to protégé sites. Candidates supplied proof of licensure and accreditation, and proposed an approach to offering technical assistance to protégé sites. Applicants also outlined the process of selecting individual staff members to serve as mentors. Some mentor sites left selection of individual staff members to the director; others had a formal application process, or designated all teaching staff as mentors. The Council selected mentor sites based on each center's history in the community, its team approach to providing technical assistance, and its ability to commit three to four days per month to mentoring other centers. The mentor sites were selected to represent a variety of regions in the state (urban and rural, northern and southern), program types (for-profit, nonprofit, Head Start, etc.), and age groups of children (infant, toddler, preschool, and school-age).

Protégé centers voluntarily requested assistance from a local mentor center, sometimes upon referral from the Division of Licensing. Mentor sites had discretion over which protégé sites were selected, and center directors also decided which staff members would be assigned to a protégé site. In most regions, protégés were served on a first-come first-served basis. Because the program model selects centers as mentors and protégés, it aided a large number of staff in a relatively short period of time.

**TRAINING FOR MENTOR CENTERS**

Staff from all five mentor sites completed an intensive one-week, three-credit class on developing mentoring skills. Class topics included reflective practice, relating personal stories, writing in journals, discussing adult learning theory and styles, dealing with resistance, creating multicultural diversity, promoting professionalism, developing an anti-bias orientation, and inspiring leadership. The course was offered as a residence program at Virginia Polytechnic and State University for either graduate or

undergraduate credit. Early childhood staff with a range of educational backgrounds attended the course.

Enrollment in the course was limited to 20 individuals, and it was provided free of charge to participants. In the first year, the program could not include all designated staff members from mentor sites. In the second year, therefore, it enrolled half the class with mentor site staff who had not yet attended, and opened the other ten spaces to any early childhood teachers with a minimum of one year of experience, three credit hours of early childhood education, and a recommendation from their directors. The students represented the state's diversity in terms of race, academic standing and geographic location. The course was not offered in the third year for lack of funds. In terms of ongoing training for mentor sites, the project coordinator met at least once a month at each site with the mentors as a group.

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR PROTÉGÉS

In fulfillment of the contract, mentor sites sent designated staff members to the protégé site, brought protégé staff members to do guided observations at the mentor site, and provided one-on-one technical assistance on particular issues. Mentors also established a support group for protégé directors covering staff supervision, management issues, and communication with parents on the quality of care. Assessment instruments to aid in documenting improvement included the classroom observation criteria in the NAEYC self-assessment.

### COMPENSATION

Each mentor site received a stipend of $700 per designated staff member. Other participants who completed the course, however, received no compensation. Some mentor sites set aside a specific amount for each mentor, and others paid staff members at an hourly rate.

### PROGRAM FUNDING

The program was supported entirely by CCDBG funds during its three years of operation. In the first two years, each mentor site received $70,000 to $90,000 per year, and $40,000 in the third year. The course cost about $1,000 per person including tuition, room and board, and was covered by the Virginia Council on Child Day Care and Early Childhood Programs through CCDBG funds.

Costs borne by staff members at mentor sites were limited to books for the course and transportation to protégé sites. The cost of substitutes was included in four out of five site budgets, and was covered by the Virginia Council on Child Day Care and Early Education. All mentor sites covered the cost of materials and provided clerical support to the program.

**PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING**

For the first two years of operation, the Council collected quarterly data on the program, including the number of hours that each mentor site provided technical assistance to protégés. The program also conducted an assessment of protégés' classrooms at two different times: before working with the mentor, and after four months of contact. The program coordinator commented that the evaluation may not demonstrate the full impact of the program model, because of the short-term nature of the funding and the short period of time between observations.

**SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS**

As reported by the program coordinator, the short-term nature of the CCDBG funding was the major obstacle to creating meaningful improvement among protégé centers. Mentor centers did not always have enough time to work with each protégé site.

When asked about the program's achievements, the program coordinator cited the elevated status of individual mentor teachers as the primary success: i.e., helping staff members to see that they have professional expertise to offer. The program succeeded in rewarding outstanding teachers, aides and directors with increased compensation, and individual mentors also appreciated the non-monetary rewards of professional empowerment and recognition.

In addition, the coordinator expressed the belief that the program helped protégés to increase their understanding of child development; the most visible effect of the program was the improvement in the physical environments of protégé classrooms. The coordinator hopes to help form a mentor teacher network in the future, including all participants who completed the mentor course, in order to continue to recognize and reward early childhood staff in Virginia.

**CONTACT**

Program no longer funded; no forwarding address available.

## Monday Morning, Inc. Mentor Program
## Bridgewater, New Jersey

### SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Monday Morning, Inc. Mentor Program, which operated as a four-month pilot in 1995, selected family child care providers to serve as mentors and protégés for a training program within their existing network. Thirteen mentors and thirteen protégés participated. Mentors and protégés completed a five-session training program provided by the DART Center at Kean College, and engaged in five site visits--four at the protégé's home and one at the mentor's. The program used the Family Day Care Environmental Rating Scale (FDCERS, developed by Harms and Clifford) to monitor changes in the caregiving environments. NCECW interviewed the program coordinator at Monday Morning, Inc.

Monday Morning, Inc. started in 1981 as a family child care providers' support program. Providers apply to be part of the Monday Morning, Inc. network, and all services are free to network members including billing of parents, referrals, liability insurance, back-up care, equipment, and technical assistance visits every six weeks. Over 200 providers are members, and the program has four regional offices. Financial support for Monday Morning, Inc. comes from parent tuition.

### ELIGIBILITY

The program sought mentor candidates with at least three years' experience working with children. Educational backgrounds were also taken into consideration, although there were no minimum educational requirements. Mentors were chosen based on demonstrated leadership and communication skills, willingness to work closely with a protégé, and commitment to Monday Morning, Inc.

### OUTREACH

The program recruited mentors through the Monday Morning, Inc. newsletter and the efforts and nominations of the four regional directors.

**SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS**

Candidates submitted written applications discussing their education and work experience, two significant experiences that had contributed to their work as a provider, their views of the types of experiences that providers need to be successful, and the skills or knowledge that they would be able to share. The selection committee, consisting of two Monday Morning, Inc. representatives, selected 13 mentors out of 23 applicants. Mentors' educational backgrounds ranged from high school diplomas to course work toward a Master's degree, and years of family child care experience ranged from one and a half to 15. Ages of children served ranged from birth through 10 years.

**TRAINING OF MENTORS**

The DART Center of Kean College designed and provided the training, under contract with Monday Morning, Inc., which consisted of five four-hour sessions. The following topics were covered: the role of a mentor, adult learning theory, the use of the FDCERS assessment tool, communication skills, the interactional process, models of supervision, creativity, problem solving, and family relationships. Training was provided tuition-free to mentors and protégés, and although no college credit was offered, participants accrued 20 hours which could be used toward a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential.

**MENTORS' WORK WITH PROTÉGÉS**

Mentors visited protégés' homes at least four times, and visits were generally scheduled between each of the seminars. A fifth visit was held at the mentor's home, so that the caregiver could observe the environment and the mentor's interactions with children and parents.

**COMPENSATION**

Mentors received no compensation but were reimbursed for expenses.

**PROGRAM FUNDING**

The total budget for the four-month pilot, originally funded by Monday Morning, Inc., was $5,600. In October 1995, the AT&T Family Care Development Fund, a joint project of AT&T, the Communications Workers of America and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, provided a full grant to cover these costs. The budget covered training costs, reimbursement for substitutes, books, and travel expenses.

### PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING

To track the program's results, the program coordinator collected demographic information on participants, and assessments before and after the training using the FDCERS. The protégés conducted another self-assessment with the FDCERS after six months. The program coordinator plans to compile these results along with a mentor and protégé "satisfaction survey" and a survey of parents, and will also conduct research to see what effect if any the program has had on retention in the field.

### SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS

According to the program coordinator, mentors and protégés responded positively to the program, and they felt that it improved their self-esteem and contributed to their professional development. Monday Morning, Inc. also takes pride that the model is easily replicable. The coordinator, however, identified two main challenges: it was difficult for providers to take time away from their businesses for the training, and additional funding to pay the mentors would have made the program stronger.

### CONTACT

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# The Penn AEYC On-Site Mentor Training Program, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

## SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Penn AEYC On-Site Mentor Training Program arranges one-day visits at mentor child care centers, which are all NAEYC-accredited, by with interested protégé teachers and directors from other centers. The program provides protégé directors and teachers with a glimpse of the advantages of NAEYC accreditation, focusing on interactions between staff and children. The goals of the program are to improve access to training, raise the compensation of child care providers, create a new career role for early childhood staff, and boost the overall quality of child care through NAEYC accreditation. Penn AEYC started the program to offer accessible opportunities for full-time teachers and directors who found it difficult to meet the state Department of Public Welfare's six-credit-hour approved annual training requirement. The program began in July 1994, and in the first full year of implementation, 55 individual mentors were selected, representing ten mentor centers in two regions of the state. The program reached a total of 80 protégé teachers and twenty protégé directors in the first year. Year 2 has been funded to offer 100 director and 150 teacher trainings in 1996. NCECW interviewed one of the program coordinators, a Penn AEYC representative at the Carnegie Mellon University Child Care Center.

## ELIGIBILITY

Mentor sites must be NAEYC-accredited child care centers that represent the state's diversity of program type and location. Individual mentors who work with protégés within these selected centers are expected to have worked in the mentor site for a minimum of one year, and are selected by the center directors. To be selected as protégés, teachers and directors must work at least 20 hours per week and must have at least one year of experience in their center.

**OUTREACH**

Recruitment efforts have been focused on protégé teachers and directors. In the western region of the state, an agency called The Training Connection published a newsletter article announcing the project; in the western and central regions, Penn AEYC did additional promotion through its local affiliates and at annual affiliate conferences. Recruitment of protégés in rural areas remains a priority for future years.

**SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS**

All NAEYC-accredited programs are plotted on a map, and certain centers are targeted, especially those in rural areas. Coordinators then research each program's reputation in the specific communities and set up site-approval visits. During the visit, they discuss the mentor program manual, assess the classrooms, and talk with possible mentor teachers. Individual mentors are selected by center directors.

All protégé candidates who have submitted applications have thus far been accepted for participation; they are then matched with mentors by the program coordinators.

**TRAINING OF MENTORS**

The six-hour training session for mentor directors and teachers includes the following topics: an overview of the program model, the differences between mentoring and supervision, the stages of teacher development, adult learning styles, the interplay between learning and development, consultation and mentoring skills, role plays of mentor-protégé situations, current issues in the child care field, leadership and professional development.

**PROTÉGÉS' GUIDED ASSESSMENT OF MENTOR CENTERS**

Protégé teachers and directors receive a packet that reviews the project and provides guided observation tools and forms for them to use on the day of their site visit. After completing their work with mentor sites, protégé teachers and directors receive six hours of training approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare to meet the state's annual training requirement.

Protégé teachers spend six hours at the mentor center and are assigned to mentor teachers who serve children of the same age. The protégés begin by conducting a guided observation with tools developed by Penn AEYC.

and then have a one-on-one conference with their mentor teacher to identify three goals to work on in their own centers. They also discuss potential barriers to implementing these goals and strategies to overcome these barriers.

Protégé directors conduct a two-hour classroom observation using the NAEYC Early Childhood Classroom Observation Questionnaire, review administrative materials, evaluate their own programs, and set goals with their mentor director for improving their programs.

**COMPENSATION**

Individual mentors receive a $50 stipend for the training, along with $50 for each protégé visit for a maximum of four protégés. Each mentor site also receives a $300 stipend to cover the costs of copying, postage and substitutes for mentor consultations. Protégés' programs are reimbursed for substitutes--$5.00 per hour for a maximum of seven hours.

**PROGRAM FUNDING**

The total budget for 1995 was $25,000 from federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds, and has been increased to $50,000 for 1996. Funding for the program is by contract from the Department of Public Welfare, which is Pennsylvania's child care licensing agency and CCDBG lead agency. The budget includes administrative overhead, trainers' fees, compensation for individual mentors, stipends to mentor centers, reimbursement of substitutes at protégés' programs, and materials.

**PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING**

Protégés complete evaluations of their mentor and of themselves. Two months after the site visit, protégés also receive a questionnaire asking whether they have been able to implement their goals for change in their centers, and what effects the program has had on their professional growth. Mentors are also asked to evaluate their training sessions.

The pilot year evaluation includes information on the number of participants, their educational background, the geographic breakdown on training (both requested and actually provided), and suggestions for training topics for entire centers.

**SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS**

According to the program coordinator, the program has succeeded in providing good on-site training for teachers and directors during the work day--unlike most previous opportunities, which were available only in the evenings and on weekends. In addition, the program has increased professionalism and camaraderie among individual mentors, and has established a new career ladder step for early childhood professionals. It also offers directors an avenue to exchange information with colleagues that was difficult to obtain until now through other training opportunities. Finally, it links compensation with training, and offers directors and teachers a helpful overview of the accreditation process. The primary challenge remains the recruitment of mentor sites and protégés in rural areas.

**CONTACT**

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## Ready to Teach, Boston, Massachusetts

### SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

The Ready to Teach Project trains family child care providers to serve as mentors to other providers engaged in a training program, called Ready to Learn, on the use of public television literacy programs in their curriculum. Mentors attend a weekend-long training program, offer protégés technical assistance by phone over a period of four months, and are compensated up to $900 per year, depending on the number of protégés they work with. The program is administered by the state Office for Children in collaboration with WGBH, Boston's PBS affiliate. Six child care resource and referral agencies are responsible for recruiting, selecting and monitoring mentors and protégés, and for coordinating the Ready to Learn training program. Since Ready to Teach began in 1993, it has trained 26 mentors who have thus far worked with approximately 52 protégés. NCECW interviewed the program administrator at the Office for Children.

### ELIGIBILITY

Mentors must complete the Ready to Learn training, and protégés must be currently enrolled in it.

### OUTREACH

The program coordinators from the area's six child care resource and referral agencies are responsible for mentor recruitment, much of which is done through word of mouth.

### SELECTION OF MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS

Each resource and referral agency selects mentors based on their interests and at the discretion of the agency coordinator, who then matches them with appropriate protégés.

### TRAINING OF MENTORS

The mentor training retreat is nearly identical to the training offered by the Finders/Seekers Program in Maine. Topics include an overview of the Ready to Learn project; definitions of quality child care; family child care professionalism; business practices such as contracts and record-keeping; resource sharing on community services; parent communication; adult learning styles; public speaking; taking care of oneself and setting limits; and practice sessions on individual and group mentoring work.

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR PROTÉGÉS

Mentors provide technical assistance by phone to other providers who are enrolled in training on the curricular use of certain public television programs. The Ready to Learn training focuses on developing literacy skills among young children, and protégés receive numerous supplies for participating in the program, including books for children to take home.

### COMPENSATION

Mentors receive $75 per protégé for each four-month cycle, at a maximum of four protégés per cycle or $900 in compensation per year.

### PROGRAM FUNDING

The total program budget is $30,000, covering six resource and referral agency sites with six mentors in each site, as well as the mentor training and a program evaluation. Ready to Teach is funded primarily by the Office for Children with federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds.

### PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TRACKING

Thus far, the program has collected limited demographic information on participants. The data it has collected concerns how protégés are using the program, the kinds of questions protégés ask, and other issues related to the Ready to Learn literacy model.

### SUCCESSES AND BARRIERS

The program administrator identified several accomplishments of the program; It has encouraged professional development for family child care providers; improved access to training; created a new mentoring role for providers without requiring an overly burdensome time commitment;

and shared expertise among mentors and protégés on a wealth of subjects. These accomplishments were possible because of the model's flexibility in meeting the needs of mentors and protégés, and its links to Massachusetts' nascent child care career development system. The primary barriers the administrator identified are the shortages of time and funding that are familiar to most mentoring programs.

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# About the National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force

The National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force (NCECW), formerly the Child Care Employee Project, is the nation's leading advocate for upgrading the compensation and training of child care teachers and providers. We are working to create a unified and powerful voice for the child care work force, advocating for fair and decent employment for caregivers and reliable, affordable, high-quality care for families.

Our landmark National Child Care Staffing Study (1989, updated 1993) clearly established the link between the quality of care that young children receive and the level of compensation that child care teachers are paid. Besides coordinating the Early Childhood Mentoring Alliance, NCECW is also the national coordinator of the Worthy Wage Campaign, a grassroots effort to mobilize child care workers to fight for solutions to the child care staffing crisis.

Our organization was founded in 1977 by child care teachers in the San Francisco Bay Area concerned about the low pay and status of their work. We relocated our offices to Washington, D.C. in the summer of 1994. Please call or write us for a complete publication list and for more information about our activities.

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

As an NCECW member, you will be assured of receiving information on the Early Childhood Mentoring Alliance, the Worthy Wage Campaign, and the latest analysis on policies affecting the early childhood work force. Membership is based on the calendar year, January 1 through December 31. To join, please fill in the information below and return to NCECW. Membership dues and donations are tax deductible.

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# NOTES

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